

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended.

Entry of the Amendment is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issues requiring further search and/or consideration; (c) does not add any additional claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Deeba et al. (Deeba), U.S. Patent No. 6,105,365. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Deeba fails to disclose an exhaust emission control apparatus with a NO_x catalyst that is provided in a looped exhaust passage, wherein a flow direction of the exhaust gas is reversed within the exhaust passage under predetermined conditions, and a controller that temporarily decreases the flow rate of the exhaust gas flowing through the NO_x catalyst, as recited in claim 1 and as similarly recited in claim 10.

Deeba fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 1 and 10 because Deeba discloses a dual type catalyst and not a reverse flow NO_x catalyst as recited in claims 1 and 10. As such, Deeba does not reverse a flow direction of the exhaust gas within the exhaust passage or temporarily decrease the flow rate of the exhaust gas flowing through the NO_x catalyst (that is provided with a looped exhaust passage) because all of the exhaust gas collectively flows into Deeba's catalyst. Deeba's structure thus has disadvantages because Deeba must use two reducing agent supply valves for two catalysts. Deeba fails to provide any disclosure with regard to controlling the flow rate of exhaust gas through a NO_x catalyst with a looped exhaust passage or using a reducing agent supply valve in such a NO_x catalyst.

Deeba's Figs. 1 and 2 disclose an exhaust apparatus, wherein exhaust gas flows from a conduit 15 to a separating means 20 that divides the flow of exhaust gas into either the conduit 22 or the conduit 24. The exhaust gas that enters the conduit 22 flows through an adsorption means 40 via a reductant injection means 30. Similarly, exhaust gas that enters the conduit 24 flows through a second adsorption means 42 via a reductant injection means 32 (col. 4, lines 9-22). The separating means 20 divides the flow of exhaust gas into a high flow stream and a low flow stream (col. 4, lines 52-53). However, all of the exhaust gas collectively flows through the adsorption means 40, 42. Deeba's Fig. 4 discloses a bench test apparatus in order to simulate the control apparatus of Fig. 2. However, the bench test apparatus directs the flow of exhaust gas in one direction and not a reverse direction.

Accordingly, Deeba fails to disclose a NO_x catalyst provided in a looped exhaust passage, wherein a flow direction of the exhaust gas is reversed within the exhaust passage (as recited in claims 1 and 10) because Deeba's exhaust apparatus does not allow for the reverse flow of exhaust gas.

Accordingly, Deeba fails to disclose all of the features recited in claims 1 and 10 as well as the additional features recited in the dependent claims thereof. It is respectfully requested that the rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-18 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

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